

Celebrating 25 Years of Service in Rural Maryland

ANNUAL REPORT FY2020

Rural Maryland Council

An independent state agency located within the Maryland Department of Agriculture



To Our Fellow Marylanders:

As an independent state agency, the Council must report each year to the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly on its activities and grant expenditures. We are pleased to share with you the Rural Maryland Council's Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report. The State's Fiscal Year began on July 1, 2019 and ended on June 30, 2020. This report documents the grant expenditures as well as the activities of the Council during this time.

Thanks to the support of Governor Hogan and the Maryland General Assembly, the Rural Maryland Council received full funding of the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund in the amount of \$6,167,000 in the Fiscal Year 2020 State's Operating Budget. Along with the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund which received an additional \$167,000, these programs are investing in our state's rural communities creating economic opportunities and improving the quality of life. A full list of grant awards is included within this report.

We welcomed new leadership with our new Chair, John Hartline Executive Director of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland. We thank our Immediate Past Chair, Scott Warner, Executive Director for the Mid-Shore Regional Council for his tireless efforts supporting the RMC and its programs. We also thank Mr. Erroll Mattox for his service to the RMC and wish him well in retirement. We welcomed new staff member Megan D'Arcy.

We successfully advocated for state action to support rural broadband expansion with the inclusion of almost \$10 million for local government broadband projects in the State's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2020. The Task Force for Rural Internet, Broadband, Wireless and Cellular Service, chaired by the RMC Executive Director, met and examined strategies and policies that will facilitate increased connectivity to our rural areas.

The Council submitted a report to the State Budget leaders on measurements for success for RMC grant programs. This important examination will allow the Council to evaluate the programs' effectiveness and ensure that taxpayer dollars are expended appropriately. We were recognized by the United State Department of Agriculture as a State Rural Development Council. We hosted the Rural Summit in December 2019 and finalized the Council's new updated Strategic Plan.

LOOKING AHEAD...

The Council will unveil its new Rural Outlook data tool to be hosted on the RMC website. We will also highlight a new film from the Rural Maryland Foundation titled "We are Rural Maryland" and undertake a digital campaign promoting this video.

Fiscal Year 2020 was unique in that state government operations were closed in March 2020 in order to respond and limit employee exposure and spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. RMC employees successfully transitioned to remote work meeting daily through Zoom. We look forward to resuming in person activities in 2021!

As always, everyone is welcome to join us at our meetings and gatherings whether in person or virtually. Thanks for all that you do to help us meet our vision of the future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies and healthy connected communities!

For our continued success,



John Hartline
RMC Chair



Charlotte Davis
Executive Director



RMC's Legislative Lunch, RMC Chair John Hartline, Senator John D. (Jack) Bailey, President Bill Ferguson, RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis, Santo Grande with Delmarva Community Services, and Scott Warner, Former RMC Chair.



In 1994, the Rural Maryland Council was initiated by the Governor as the Maryland Rural Development Council (Executive Order 01.01.1994.14) and then codified by statute in 1995 as the FORVUM for Rural Maryland. In July 2003 the FORVM restructured as the Rural Maryland Council.

Our **MISSION** is to bring together citizens, community-based organizations, federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to collectively address the needs of rural Maryland. The RMC is an independent state agency located within the Maryland Department of Agriculture. We provide a venue for members of agriculture and natural resource-based industries, health care facilities, educational institutions, businesses, economic and community development organizations, nonprofit entities and government agencies to cross traditional boundaries, share information and address in a holistic way the special needs and opportunities in rural Maryland.

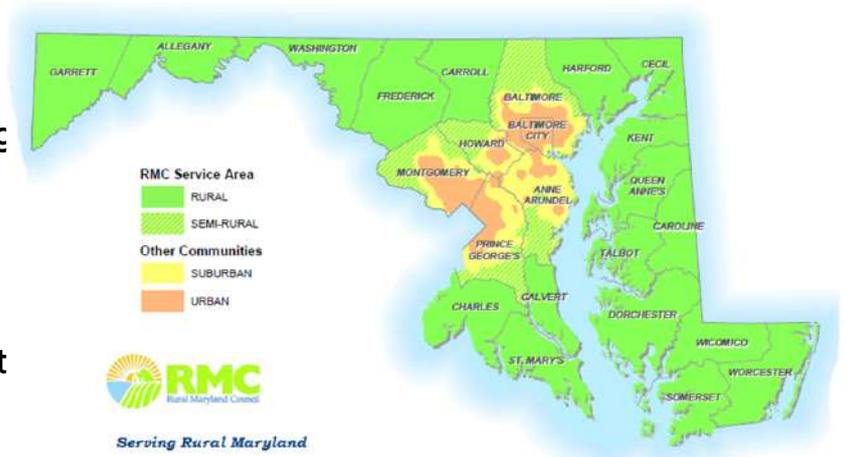
Our **VISION** is a future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies and healthy connected communities.

Our GOALS

- Encourage healthy, connected communities throughout Rural Maryland through convening of stakeholders, education, public relations and advocacy.
- Support the development and growth of vibrant economies in Rural Maryland
- Foster stewardship of Maryland's natural resources
- Maximize RMC outreach, resources and mission through financial and organizational development

Service Territory

State Statute designate the following counties as rural: Allegany, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, and Worcester





RMC New Board Members: Chair John Hartline, Bill Valentine, Sara Seitz, Holly Porter, Beth Hill, Jean Fabi, Elizabeth Chung, Dr. Heidi Anderson, RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis

RMC Officers

Chair

- John Hartline, Executive Director
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

First Vice Chair

- Erroll Mattox (retired)

Representing RMC Committees

Joint Planning & Development Committee

- Mike Thielke, Executive Director
Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center

Legislative Committee

- Lindsay Thompson, Executive Director
Maryland Grain Producers
- Chris Benzing, Executive Director
Maryland Rural Development Corporation

Second Vice Chair

- Gregory Padgham, Executive Director
Tri-County Council for Lower Eastern Shore

Immediate Past Chair

- Scott Warner, Executive Director
Mid-Shore Regional Council

Agriculture Committee

- Erroll Mattox (Retired)

RMPIF Committee

- Susan O'Neill, Executive Director
Upper Shore Regional Council
- Matt Tefteau, Government Affairs Manager
Choptank Electric Cooperative

Representing Rural Maryland Foundation

Chair

- Daniel Rider, Maryland Forest Program Director
Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Immediate Past Chair

- Scott Warner, Executive Director
Mid-Shore Regional Council

RMC Executive board

Representing District 1 (Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties)

- **Ms. Leslie Hart, Washington County Economic Development**

Representing District 2 (Frederick, Carroll and Harford Counties)

- **Elizabeth Chung, Asian American Center of Frederick**

Representing District 3 (Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's Counties)

- **Chris Kaselemis, St. Mary's County Office Department of Economic Development**

Representing District 4 (Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's Counties)

- **Jean Fabi, Queen Anne's County Economic Development**

Representing District 5 (Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties)

- **Josh Hastings, Lower Shore Land Trust**

For Profit Organizations

- **Renee Sheehy, Delmarva Power**

Representing State At-Large

- **Bill Valentine, Valentine Plumbing**

Representing the Maryland Association of Counties

- **Jack Wilson, Board of Commissioners, Queen Anne's County**
- **Wilbur Levensgood, Board of Commissioners, Caroline County**

Representing the Maryland Municipal League

- **John Kinnaird, Mayor, Town of Thurmont**
- **Jamie Windon, Commissioner, Talbot County**

Representing the Governor's Office

- **Stephen Schatz, Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs**

Representing Maryland Farm Bureau

- **Trish Hildebrand Bucci, Maryland Farm Bureau**

Representing Special Appointment

- **Steve McHenry, Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)**
- **Dr. Heidi Anderson, President, UMES**

- Representing USDA Rural Development
 - **Denise Lovelady, USDA Rural Development**
- Representing Maryland Department of Commerce
 - **Elizabeth Carver, Regional Growth and Retention**
- Representing Maryland Department of Agriculture
 - **Cassie Shirk, Maryland Department of Agriculture**
- Representing Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
 - **Cindy Stone, Department of Housing and Community Development**
- Representing Maryland Department of Health
 - **Sara Seitz, Maryland Department of Health**
- Representing University of Maryland Extension
 - **James Hanson, University of Maryland Extension**
- Representing Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
 - **Leanne Mazer, Tri- County Council for Western Maryland**
- Representing Maryland Association of Community Action Agencies
 - **Santo Grande, Maryland Association of Community Action Agencies**
- Representing Maryland Forest Association
 - **Beth Hill, Maryland Forests Association**
- Representing Delmarva Poultry Industry
 - **Holly Porter, Delmarva Poultry Industry**

Representing Maryland Senate

- **The Honorable George Edwards**
Senator, District 1
- **The Honorable Katie Fry Hester**
Senator, District 9
- **The Honorable Douglas Peters**
Senator, District 23

Representing Maryland House of Delegates

- **The Honorable Sheree Sample-Hughes**
Delegate, District 37A
- **The Honorable Mike McKay**
Delegate, District 1C
- **The Honorable Brian Crosby**
Delegate, District 29B

RMC Staff

- **Charlotte Davis**
Executive Director
- **Megan D'Arcy**
Program Administrator
- **Amanda Clevenger**
Administrative and Communications Assistant



Serving Rural Communities

The Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget Joint Chairmen's Report "requested that the Rural Maryland Council submit a report by September 1, 2019, on input, output, outcome, and efficiency measures that show the direct connection between the funding that it provides in grants and the improvement in quality of life in rural communities."

The Council reviewed and quantified the Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 grantee reports to identify outcomes, outputs and impacts. As a result of this work, the Council identified the need for a grants administration database to assist in collecting data from RMC grantees. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Council deployed an online grants portal that has greatly facilitated the application, decision making and reporting processes.

Managing for Results (MFR) is a strategic planning, performance measurement, and budgeting process that emphasizes use of resources to achieve measurable results, accountability, efficiency, and continuous improvement in State government programs. The Council has been reporting MFRs annually since 2019 and measurements include: amount of matching funds secured, number of

research reports or tools created, amount of funds invested in capital items, number of jobs created or retained, number of loans made, number of individuals trained, served, or reached, number of instructional hours delivered, and number of services provided.

Performance Measures	CODE	Actual 2016	Actual 2017	Actual 2018	Actual 2019	Actual 2020	Estimated 2021	Estimated 2022
RMC								
Rural Population	M601	1,720,988	1,742,147	1,687,624	1,750,097*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rural per capita income	M602	\$31,782	\$33,736	\$34,887*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of grant applications received	M603	57	138	172	175	178	175	176
Private sector dollars leveraged for rural development projects	M604	\$582,629	\$14,772,377	\$17,870,185	\$5,636,990	\$11,233,271	\$11,580,149	\$9,483,470
Number of attendees at biennial Rural Summit	M605	N/A	350	N/A	389	N/A	400	N/A
Rural unemployment rate	M606	6.60%	N/A	4.13%	N/A	7.74%*	N/A	N/A
Rate of broadband access in rural communities	M607	64.00%	81.00%	81.00%	81.00%*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health care providers per 100K rural population	M608	4,712	4,407*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of people trained/served/reached through RMC grants**	M609	N/A	6,902	22,356	18,755	44,728	28,613	30,699
Number of loans made with RMC grants**	M610	N/A	6	0	1	19	10	10
Total RMC funds invested in capital items**	M611	N/A	\$183,675	\$689,276	\$1,147,389	\$6,549,225	\$2,795,297	\$3,497,304
Number of research and tools created and executed through RMC grants**	M612	N/A	6	9	9	42	20	24

*Denotes most recent publicly accessible information

**Actual numbers may change as 36% of Grantees were approved extensions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and 5% are missing reports.

RMC MFRs submitted to the Maryland Department of Agriculture for FY2020.

Strategic Planning

The Council completed the goals laid out in the 2017-2020 strategic plan. Beginning in 2019, the RMC Executive Board began its strategic planning process with a Board retreat on May 24, 2019. The Joint Planning and Development Committee as well as the Executive Committee met for two additional facilitated planning sessions during FY2020 that resulted in the final plan scheduled to be presented and adopted in early FY2021. The purpose of the Plan is to achieve the following set of goals in order to respond to the growing numbers of requests for help, and to address ever-changing social and economic challenges in Maryland's rural communities.

2021-2024 Strategic Plan Goals:

- **Goal 1** - Develop a plan for long-term financial sustainability.
- **Goal 2** - Encourage and facilitate active participation by RMC members to a) extend RMC's reach and influence and b) groom potential new board members.
- **Goal 3** - Make RMC more valuable to legislators and other key stakeholders.
- **Goal 4** - Develop protocols for responding to new opportunities that arise.

- **Goal 5** - Gather and analyze data on rural issues to identify trends and needs.
- **Goal 6** - Create transition and emergency plans for the board and the staff.



Strategic Plan 2021-2024

The Strategic Plan along with other publications can be found on RMC's website rural.maryland.gov

USDA Recognition

On December 20, 2018, President Trump signed into law the 2018 Farm Bill, which included continued authorization of the state rural development councils (SRDCs). On October 7, 2019, the Council received its official recognition from USDA in support of the SRDCs. The following SRDCs were recognized: Arizona, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Wisconsin.



The SRDCs are uniquely positioned to expand community and economic development opportunities for America's rural communities and their residents. SRDCs, across the country, work in their states to conduct research, work with state and federal government officials, partner with other community and economic development organizations, and serve as leaders representing the perspective and needs of rural communities.

Rural Impact Awards

The Maryland Rural Impact Awards is an opportunity to annually recognize individuals and organizations that have performed extraordinary acts of service to communities throughout rural Maryland.

There are four award categories:

- The **Rural Community Development Award** was established to recognize a program, project or organization that substantially improves the quality of life in at least one rural community. Award criteria includes: dedication and creativity in providing community-oriented service; evidence of collaboration with relevant stakeholders to resolve social problems; and the use of partnerships or leveraged resources to realize community achievement goals.
- The **Rural Volunteer Award** was established to recognize leadership, dedication, and noteworthy volunteer achievement beyond the call of one's professional duties to help improve their community. Award criteria include: distinctive volunteer efforts; understanding of community needs; positive contributions impacting the economic, health, or well being of their community; dedication to community; and overall leadership in community.
- The **Rural Economic Development Award** was established to recognize a program, project or organization that successfully attracts, retains or creates jobs in at least one rural county. Award criteria includes: significance of jobs attracted, retained or created in relation to a community's economic development objectives; noteworthy, creative, or innovative techniques brought to bear on challenging economic development situations; and the use of partnerships for leveraged resources in achieving business development goals.
- The **Rural Champion Award** was established to recognize outstanding leadership and public service in promoting legislation and/or policy solutions to benefit rural communities. Award criteria includes: demonstrated wisdom and foresight in dealing with rural issues; exemplary leadership; ability to work with community members and organizations to understand Rural Maryland priorities; commitment to working with public servants to address rural community needs; and overall dedication to serving constituents.

Rural Economic Development Award to **Cecil County Economic Development**. The Cecil County Economic Development (OED), located in Elkton, MD, is a government agency that promotes business activity and development in the Cecil County area. The OED holds monthly Towns-County Meetings where the towns and the OED come together to discuss projects, issues and initiatives happening across the county. This relationship has helped not only the municipalities connect with each other and support efforts occurring in other parts of the county, but it has also allowed the OED to help with growth in towns and assist them in reaching their objectives. The OED has played a crucial role in the County's economic transformation, which includes the County ranking #2 for job growth in the State (1,352 new jobs in Cecil County in 2019 alone) along with the 3rd highest 1-year wage growth rate of all Maryland counties. Future projects in the Great Wolf Lodge in the Town of Perryville and hosting a Five-Star equestrian event at Fair Hill.



Cecil County Economic Development Team accepting Rural Economic Development Award.

Rural Champion Award to **Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes**. Sheree Sample-Hughes (Democrat) is a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, where she was recently appointed Speaker Pro Tem. She was first elected to the House of Delegates in 2014 representing District 37A. She has been instrumental in improving rural health care delivery. Last year, she successfully sponsored House Bill 570 (Chapter 274) - Outpatient Mental Health Centers – Medical Directors – Telehealth. This law allows our rural health care providers flexibility in hiring medical directors. Our rural clinics often have issues recruiting physicians. This bill requires regulations governing behavioral health programs to include a provision authorizing an outpatient mental health center to satisfy any regulatory requirement that the medical director be on site through the use of telehealth by the director. In 2016, she sponsored HB1494 - Income Tax -



Speaker Pro Tem Sheree Sample-Hughes accepting the Rural Champion Award.

In 2016, she sponsored HB1494 - Income Tax -Credit for Preceptors in Areas With Health Care Workforce Shortages (Chapters 386) established nonrefundable tax credits against the State income tax for a licensed physician or nurse practitioner who serves without compensation as a preceptor in an approved preceptorship program. Each year, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) may issue up to \$100,000 for each of the physician preceptorship credits and nurse practitioner preceptorship credits. Tax credit applications are approved on a first-come, first-served basis until the cap of \$100,000 for the year is reached for each credit. In 2017, she successfully sponsored House Bill 683 (Chapter 235) Income Tax - Credit for Nurse Practitioner or Licensed Physician in Preceptorship Program – Alterations which made changes to the Preceptor Program. The Honorable Sheree Sample-Hughes holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations from Delaware State University and a Masters degree in Public Administration from Wilmington University.



Rural Legacy Awardee The Honorable Mike Miller

The Rural Legacy Award to **Senate President Mike Miller**. Senator Miller was first elected to the Senate in 1974 and is the longest serving Maryland Senate President and the longest serving President of the Senate in the United States. Senator Miller has been a strong supporter of rural Maryland and the Rural Maryland Council. When the RMC visited a few years ago in support of funds for the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund we could count on his support. The Council would not have received those funds without his support and blessings.

In lieu of a plaque or clock, the Executive Committee agreed to make a \$2,500 donation to the College of Southern Maryland Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. Endowed Scholarship Fund.

- The **Rural Legacy Award** was created to recognize a legislator who has particularly served Maryland's rural areas with distinction.

The Awards Ceremony was held at the RMC Annual Dinner on December 11, 2019 in Annapolis.

Awardees

Rural Community Development Award to **Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation**. The Evergreen Heritage Center (EHC), a historic 130 acre Maryland farm, is located in rural Allegany County. The EHC Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 2008 to leverage the EHC to empower the region's children (in Allegany, Washington, and Garrett counties) through experiential education programs that are aligned with the Maryland State Curriculum. To pursue this mission, the EHC Foundation partnered with members of the academic, business, and public service sectors to develop both impactful education programs and Center infrastructure that would support those programs as well as other needs of the community.



The barn at Evergreen Heritage Center used for events on the upper floor and a living history museum on the lower floor.

Rural Community Development Award to **Sudlersville Laundromat**. Sudlersville, Queen Anne's County (QAC) and QAC Public School officials and civic leaders recognized a serious issue – the lack of adequate public laundromat facilities. School officials found more children coming to school with dirty clothes or worse, children were staying home to avoid being bullied and embarrassed. While teachers were assisting by taking laundry home for these children, the need was greater than their ability to meet it. In response, the Town of Sudlersville rehabilitated a portion of a mostly vacant, former middle school building as a public laundromat. The laundromat is located in the former Shop room of the school. The concrete floor was adequate to support laundry equipment and a separate entrance with a ramp was constructed to make the facility accessible to disabled people. The laundromat is operated by the Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company, which took ownership of the building from the Town in 2016. The new laundromat was developed with community input and support from local government and community organizations, as well as the Sudlersville Middle School.



Photo Left: Access Door to Sudlersville Laundromat.

Rural Volunteer Award to **Mr. Robert "Bob" Arnold of Arnold Farms**. As president of Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau, Bob was in charge of the last Delmarva Chicken Festival hosted on the Eastern Shore. He has also been recognized by the Maryland Food Bank as "Farmer of the Year" for his contributions to the hungry in Maryland. The accomplishment that Bob is most proud of, is the award his family received last year as one of two families chosen to receive the "Queen Anne's Farm Family of the Year." As a Choptank Electric Cooperative Board Director, Bob recognizes the vital role that Choptank plays in the communities it serves and strives to represent all its members fairly and equitably. Mr. Arnold, his wife Sarah, and sons Bobby, Peter, and Brian reside on Double Creek Road.



Photo Below: Industrial laundry equipment purchased with RMC Grant Funds.



Rural Volunteer Awardee Robert Arnold

Enhancing quality of life is a goal that's at the heart of most policymaking regardless of whether you are working from a community or town, county, state or national perspective. For most stakeholders identifying the problems is the easy part. Finding solutions, however, is a whole other story often laden with intertwining issues like funding and who can or should manage the process.

When the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) hosted its 2019 Summit this concept of how to create sustainable change was front and center as leaders from throughout the state provided examples of how they were championing solutions in their communities for complex issues in agriculture, aquaculture and forestry as well as health care, community development and economic development. The day-long Summit, titled Rural Maryland Rising: Investing in Resiliency, Collaboration, and Innovation, and RMC's Annual Meeting which was held the evening before attracted nearly 300 rural residents, business owners, community leaders and legislators from across the state.

Keynote speaker, Paul Costello, Ph.D., executive director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development, set the tone for the Summit. "In the face of our rural challenges, to build unity and momentum to get things done, we need to carry relentless optimism," says Dr. Costello. "Let's stop defining rural as a failure and as a deficit. Let's define it by its strengths and its critical importance to the future, and let's work together for a New Ruralism, a renewal and re-engagement with all the creative forces for good in rural communities," he adds.

For Charlotte Davis, Dr. Costello's remarks couldn't have been more on point. "All too often when we are working in our communities we get too focused on identifying the problems. But when we get together to discuss the challenges, develop proactive solutions, and identify ways to implement those solutions that's when real, sustainable change happens," Davis says. "Through events like the Summit we can come together to share doable solutions. This brand of proactive problem-solving has really gotten the attention of our Maryland legislators," she adds.

The Summit included breakout sessions, a 2020 session preview with Maryland legislators, and a luncheon panel session with Maryland cabinet secretaries and department leadership. The Summit also included a welcome by Maryland Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford and AgShowcase19, featuring four agricultural innovators who presented a TED-styled talk about how they are changing the face of agriculture in Maryland (and around the country).

Sponsored by the MidAtlantic Farm Credit, the session featured live, online audience voting/participation to determine award amounts for the presenters based on criteria such as relevance and innovation. The AgShowcase19 first place winner is **Ovipost** of Cordova, which automates cricket farming to help insects become an affordable, scalable, sustainable, high-protein ingredient for broad use throughout the agricultural supply chain. Tied for second place were:

- MadTech Modern Agronomy of Huntingtown, last year's AgPitch winner, which uses agricultural drones to give farmers comprehensive and detailed information about their crops.



Keynote Speaker: Paul Costello, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development. Photo by EdwinRemsberg/Remsberg.com



Steve McHenry, executive director of MARBIDCO, speaks during a breakout session on the statewide Strategic Plan for Maryland Agriculture. Photo by EdwinRemsberg/Remsberg.com

- Mercaris of Silver Spring, which provides up-to-date, accurate information on market conditions for organic and non-GMO commodities as well as a trading platform for buyers and sellers.
- Terrapulse of College Park, which uses satellite imagery to provide public and private sector clients with real-time data to map and monitor land and how it changes over time.



The 2019 winner at the AgShowcase19 was Ovipost of Cordova. Accepting the check from Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, left, and Thomas H. Truitt, Jr., president and chief executive officer of MidAtlantic Farm Credit, right, is Trina Chiasson, co-founder and chief executive officer at Ovipost. Photo by MidAtlantic Farm Credit

The Honorable Peter Franchot, Comptroller of Maryland, did the official check presentation to the AgShowcase19 winners and closed out the Summit with brief remarks.

"Although we are humbled by the number of benchmarks and successes that RMC and our partners have achieved in 2019, we still have a lot of heady projects to tackle,"

says Davis. "We must continue to work on issues like broadband so that our rural communities can equitably compete in a global economy. The balancing act between respecting and honoring our heritage to the land while implementing real change for a sustainable future will continue and we need everyone at the table to do this important work," she adds.

Thanks to our sponsors:

- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- Bereato & White LLC
- Angel Flight East
- Western Maryland Resource Conservation & Development District
- Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit
- City of Havre de Grace Economic Development
- Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association
- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
- MARBIDCO
- USDA Rural Development
- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Grow & Fortify
- Kent County Economic Development
- Cecil County
- Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development
- Maryland Relay
- Maryland Department of Health
- Tri-County Council of Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland
- Upper Shore Regional Council
- TEDCO
- Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland/SMADC
- Frostburg State University
- Choptank Electric Cooperative
- AHEC West
- Maryland Forest Foundation
- Maryland Rural Health Association
- Go-Getters, Inc.
- Channel Marker, Inc.
- Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
- NetGlo
- Maryland Horse Industry Board
- Mid-Shore Regional Council
- Lyme Disease Association of Delmarva

2020 Legislative Review

RMC's Legislative Committee met bi-weekly to review legislative efforts, advance its legislative priorities and work with legislators. Other activities included testifying before standing committees, working with the Rural Caucus and local rural delegations, as well as drafting and submitting written position statements.

Rural Maryland Day

This year, Governor Hogan proclaimed February 4, 2020 as Rural Maryland Day. As part of Rural Maryland Day, the RMC welcomed more than 100 rural advocates to meet with dozens of elected officials and staff. The RMC was officially recognized during floor sessions in the State House and, in partnership with the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts and the Maryland Dairy Industry Association, hosted a luncheon with over 250 attendees.

RMC Budget Priorities Achieved Under Senate Bill 190 and Senate Bill 191

- RMC will receive \$6,160,575 in funding for the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund. The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) will receive \$167,000.
- The five Regional Councils were funded at \$200,000 each.
- The Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) will receive its core funding at \$2,873,000.
- The Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program will receive \$2.5 million in Fiscal Year 2021.
- The Office of Rural Broadband will receive \$9,160,000 through the Local Government Infrastructure Fund in the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.



Rural Maryland Day, RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis, RMC Chair John Hartline and Ryan Snow with Governor Hogan's Office.



Frederick County Rural Advocates with Delegate Regina Boyce to share their stories during Rural Maryland Day.

Rural Caucus

The Rural Caucus met on February 27, 2020 chaired by Delegate Brian Crosby from Southern Maryland to discuss issues that focus on our rural areas. Comptroller Peter Franchot spoke to the group as well as the Maryland Rural Health Association and the Maryland Farm Bureau.

Rural Legislative Highlights

- **Tax Relief with the passage of an exemption on sales and use taxes on aircraft parts and equipment (HB16/SB121 Sponsors: Senator Addie Eckardt, Delegate Chris Adams) and an exemption for data centers on sales and use taxes and personal property taxes (HB1339/SB397 Sponsors: Delegate Jay Jacobs, Senator Steve Hershey)**
- **Expansion of telehealth with the creation of a mental health coverage pilot program (SB502 Sponsors: Senator Steve Hershey and Bill Ferguson)**
- **Expansion of the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program (HB998/SB501 Sponsors: Senator Steve Hershey, Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes)**



Josh Smith, Western Maryland RC&D meeting with Delegate Ben Brooks on Rural Maryland Day.



Delegate Brian Crosby, Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Mark Widmeyer with Governor Hogan's Officer and Comptroller Peter Franchot at the February 27th Rural Caucus Meeting (organized by Delegate Crosby office and RMC)

- Expansion of broadband services (HB999/SB540 Sponsors: Senator Steve Hershey, Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes)
- **Expansion of water resources for municipal governments (HB1035/SB495 Sponsors: Delegate Chris Adams, Senator Addie Eckardt)**
- Passed but Vetoed: Inclusion of Agriculture Education as a priority in career and technical education. (HB1300/SB1000 Sponsors: Speaker Jones, President Ferguson)
- **Passed but Vetoed: Development of agricultural markets with the creation of a Local Farm Enterprise Program (HB1488/SB985 Sponsors: Delegate Lorig Charkoudian, Senator Katie Fry Hester)**

Operating and Capital Budget Highlights:

Before the abrupt adjournment, the State's Fiscal Year 2021 Operating and Capital budgets were passed with bipartisan support. The Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Bill, Senate Bill 190, constrains growth at 0.4%, achieves Spending Affordability Committee goals and leaves a fund balance of \$231.3 million and a structural surplus of \$67 million. Almost \$1.4 billion in cash resources are preserved including \$1.2 billion in the Rainy Day Fund. State support for public schools will exceed \$7.2 billion and direct aid to local school systems will increase an estimated \$236.3 million, or 3.8%. The budget plan dedicates \$362 million to support the implementation of The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and \$10 million in funds for the Coronavirus Response.

2020 LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- 3 Events Hosted: Welcome Breakfast, Legislative Lunch, and Rural Maryland Day
- 6 Biweekly conference calls with Legislative Committee
- 28 Written position statements submitted
- 181 Bills monitored

The Collective Voice for Rural Maryland

Grant Programs

The **Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF)** is funded through the state of Maryland's Annual Operating Budget. MAERDAF provides small grants to nonprofit organizations and community colleges located in the State's rural areas. In Fiscal Year 2020, MAERDAF received \$167,000.00 in appropriations and awarded 36 grants to rural-serving organizations.

Nonprofit organizations and community colleges in our State's rural regions often lack the access to public and private sector philanthropic opportunities they need to obtain important programmatic and special project funding. Moreover, local governments, especially those in economically distressed rural regions do not have the financial wherewithal to fully address these important developmental needs; consequently, a serious resource deficit exists where the need has often been the greatest.

MAERDAF was established in 2000 with the purpose to increase the overall capacity of rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges to meet a multitude of rural development challenges and to help them establish new public/private partnerships for leveraging non-state sources of funding.

- MAERDAF has four focus areas:
- Agriculture and Forestry Education
 - Community and Economic Development
 - Health Care
 - Regional Planning

FY2020 GRANT REVIEW BOARD

• **Mindie Burgoyne**, Regional Development Representative, Commerce - Upper Shore

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• **Sara Seitz**, Director, State Office of Rural Health

• **Dona Sorce**, Project Manager, Division of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

• **Helen Wernecke**, Rural Maryland Chair Designee

MAERDAF Coordinator

• **Charlotte Davis**, Executive Director Rural Maryland Council

The goal of the **Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)** is to help raise the overall standard of living in rural areas to a level that meets or exceeds statewide benchmark averages by 2030, while preserving the best aspects of a pastoral heritage and rural way of life. Resources provided to the Fund are designed to facilitate significant targeted investments in important economic and community development programs and promote regional and intergovernmental cooperation. These investments will also enable local and regional public and nonprofit organizations to leverage additional non-state financial and human resources to facilitate the realization of sustainable rural development objectives.

RMPIF supports the Rural Maryland Council's activities and another grant program, Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF). This Fund provides capacity building funds to rural nonprofit service providers and community colleges. It also supports the state's five Regional Councils-regional planning and development agencies located across the State.

RMPIF was authorized by the Maryland General Assembly in 2006. In 2016, the Fund received \$2 million for targeted investment to promote economic prosperity in Maryland's traditionally disadvantaged and underserved rural communities. By sustaining efforts to promote rural regional cooperation, facilitating entrepreneurial activities and supporting key community colleges and nonprofit providers, the quality of life in rural Maryland can be advanced over the next several years.

RMPIF has three focus areas:

- Entrepreneurship
- Health Care
- Infrastructure

The Rural Maryland Council serves as the administrative agency in receiving the applications and disbursing the funds. Grant award decisions are made by the independent Grant Review Board set by law and consisting of the Secretaries (or their designee). Please refer to the side panel for a list of Board Members. The Rural Maryland Council would like to thank the Governor for inclusion of funds to support RMPIF, the Maryland Delegates and Maryland Senators for their support and, in particular, the Senate Budget and Taxation and the House Appropriations Committees.

COVID-19 Impacts

This past April, RMC staff reached out to FY2020 Grantees by survey to learn how COVID-19 was impacting their work. The survey was sent out to 64 grantees and the Council received a total of 26 responses. Main challenges included but were not limited to both fundraising and program cancellation; inability to provide services; technology transitioning; and decline in donations. The Grant Review Board approved 6 month - 1 year extensions to 31% of Grantees due to pandemic related challenges.

MAERDAF GRANT AWARD PROJECTS



Photo from far left courtesy of Shore Gourmet, Mobile Farmers Market/Pantry Project; Jesse Klump Suicide Awareness Prevention Program; Maces Lane Community Center project; and, Health Partners, Inc.

Delmarva Discovery Center & Museum, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Delmarva Agriculture - Shore Proud

Summary - The Delmarva Discovery Museum, Inc. is 16,000 square feet of universally-accessible exhibits featuring the natural and cultural histories of Delmarva located on the Lower Shore of Maryland. The Museum built a new interactive exhibit called Delmarvalous Agriculture which will pay homage to the agriculture industry on the Shore. At the Museum, students and guests engage in content on agricultural supply chains, markets, crop science and natural resources, regional heritage, and ecological stewardship.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided the salaries and wages of an Education Coordinator. Six month extension approved.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Mitigating the Effects of Saltwater Intrusion on Agriculture

Summary - Rising sea levels and saltwater intrusion poses a growing threat to farms around the Chesapeake Bay. Saltwater intrusion endangers crops since few crops can tolerate salt. Approximately 20% of irrigated farmland in Maryland may already be partially salt contaminated contributing to poor yields. The Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC or 'The Center') through the F3 Tech Accelerator program ('F3 Tech'), seeks to motivate and facilitate entrepreneurs and innovators in generating solutions that will help mitigate the problem and its negative impacts on the environment and agricultural yields. F3 Tech hosted a symposium on saltwater intrusion and the solutions which are in development and are needed to counter its effects. F3 Tech also held challenge events around the state to build a focus on the issue and the opportunities in this sector.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the consultation costs of the Eastern Shore GIS Regional Cooperative to map and assess Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland counties for contaminated fields and provided for Challenge Event awards, marketing and promotion.

Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation

Amount Awarded - \$19,200

Project Name - Living off the Land Agricultural Museum

Summary - The Evergreen Heritage Center, serving Garrett and Allegany Counties, is establishing an agricultural museum in its newly restored historic barn. This project will share 200 years of rural Western Maryland farm life spanning the late 1700s when the farm was first established by the Grimes family through 1869 when the current owners (the Trimble family) acquired and then continued to farm the land. This Living Off the Land Agricultural Museum displays dozens of tools and implements to tell the story of the history of the farm; how the 200-year-old barn was built; the farm's bounty including fruits, vegetables, grains, wild foods, and animal products; its farm animals; and the farming process including planting, fertilizing, harvesting, milling, preserving, baking, and cooking, presented against the backdrop of the Barn's rustic stables.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the contractual costs for a preservation specialist, a carpenter, an artist, and an electrician; materials for museum renovation and outfitting including displays, lighting, signage, and brochures; and, educational, testing, and survey materials for students and visitors.

Frederick CTC FFA Alumni
Amount Awarded - \$13,509

Project Name - Mid Maryland Agricultural and Green Industry Career and College Fair

Summary - Nationwide, there is a shortage of students pursuing post-secondary education in agriculture and related fields and there exists a shortage of skilled labor for these careers. Seeking to showcase the opportunities in these fields, the Frederick Career and Technology Center and Future Farmers of America Alumni will host the Mid Maryland Agricultural and Green Industry Career and College Fair (MAGICC Fair). With students from the rural counties of Carroll, Frederick, and Washington invited to attend, the MAGICC Fair demonstrates the career possibilities of agricultural and green industries. For 2020, MAGICC plans to expand to include an area for students to showcase their skills for potential employers including: equipment operation, irrigation, hardscape installation, plumbing and electrical.

MAERDAF grant award funds will provide for transportation costs for students to attend the rescheduled event in fall 2020; publications and documents such as a vendor map, marketing materials, posters and banners; and, costs of substitute teacher coverage. *Six month extension approved.*

Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna
Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Critical Home Repairs for Low-Income Families

Summary - In Fiscal Year 2020, Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna, serving Cecil and Harford Counties, participated in demonstration project called Project CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place – Advancing Better Living for Elders). A nurse, occupational therapist, and carpenter/handyman worked as a team to improve independence and mobility, manage chronic symptoms, and decrease health care costs for adults aged 70 and older struggling with activities of daily living. The organization assessed the overall condition of the houses and worked with the homeowners and health partners to prioritize the repairs necessary to the health and safety of the residents. Repairs included but were not limited to heat pumps, handicap accessibility improvements, mold remediation and fireproofing, weatherization, and/or installing a hot water heater.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for contracting costs for individual home repairs and the costs of materials, safety equipment and home appliances for low-income homeowners.

Wicomico Farm and Home Show, Inc.
Amount Awarded - \$13,094*

Project Name - Wicomico County Fair Livestock Show & Facility Improvements

Summary - The Wicomico County Fair and Home Show (WFHS) celebrated its 83rd year in August 2019. The vibrant, family-oriented event highlights agriculture and the heritage of the Lower Eastern Shore, attracting thousands of visitors each year to Winterplace Park in Salisbury. WFHS constructed a new livestock show ring, installed permanent electricity and improved drainage in the area at Winterplace Park that is currently used by youth to show livestock at the Wicomico County Fair.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided construction costs for a 40 foot by 40 foot pole building including materials and supplies and the costs to deliver electricity to the building including materials and supplies. The project was placed on hold as the work and labor is in kind and is limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. *Six month extension approved. *This grant award was partially funded through the MAERDAF only funds and the other portion through the RMPF award fund.*

MAERDAF GRANT AWARD PROJECTS (RMPF FUNDED)

Cecil County Farm Museum
Amount Awarded - \$20,000

Project Name - The Cecil County Farm Museum Regional Multi-Purpose Learning Center

Summary - The Cecil County Farm Museum (CCFM) was created to promote the rich agricultural heritage of Cecil County, which was and continues to be, a major contributor to the socio-economic

development of the Upper Shore region of Maryland. For Fiscal Year 2020, CCFM seeks to develop a Regional Multi-Purpose Learning Center ('Center'). The proposed center will serve as a venue to host regional agricultural education activities including monthly 4-H club meetings, annual leadership conferences and a monthly speaker series

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to provide for the installation of a two inch water supply line from the Cecil County School of Technology, approximately 900 feet, to a supply hydrant on the CCFM site and provide for the installation of a Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning system in the Center. *Six month extension approved.*

Chesapeake Culinary Center

Amount Awarded - \$20,000

Project Name - Mobile Farmers Market/Pantry

Summary - Chesapeake Culinary Center was established in 2004 with the mission of building a workforce that supports the Eastern Shore's tourism industry and, by extension, the agriculture and seafood industries. The Center offers classes and training programs for youth and adults. It also provides a community kitchen and incubator services for small food-based businesses. The Mobile Farmers Market and Pantry ('Mobile Unit') of Chesapeake Culinary Center will primarily serve residents and organizations in the Mid-Shore region, including but not limited to Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot counties. The Mobile Unit will provide fresh foods to children, families, and the elderly to mitigate food insecurity and poverty by delivering local produce and products to nine accessible sites at regular times. In collaboration with agency partners, Chesapeake Culinary Center will raise awareness of and increase opportunities for healthy nutrition, locally grown produce and products, and regional services. This service will also provide a venue for farmers to sell their products.

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to purchase a refrigerated cargo vehicle.

Fair Hill Foundation

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Fair Hill Equine Improvements Project

Summary - The State of Maryland and Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area (Fair Hill) are redeveloping the equestrian and event facilities at Fair Hill to prepare to host the world-class Concours Complet International Five-Star event, an international equestrian competition. These upgraded facilities will draw local, regional, national, and international equestrian competitions in flat racing, steeplechasing, 3-Day eventing, and horse shows, and non-equestrian events. In order to sufficiently prepare for the future management of the facilities, the Fair Hill Foundation will draft and implement an operations and management plan that will guide governance and sustainability; ensure compliance to state and federal laws and regulations; and operationalize fundraising and marketing activities that guarantees the fiscal stability of the Foundation and its continued work in supporting equine improvement projects.

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to provide for the salary and wages of the Executive Director; professional development training of Foundation staff; provide consultant costs for the production of a Foundation governance plan, including a compliance calendar; and provide for membership costs to the Association of Fundraising Professionals. *Six month extension approved.*

For All Seasons, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - School Mental Health First Aid

Summary - For All Seasons serves the five counties of Maryland's Mid-Shore with behavioral health and rape crisis services and seeks to continue the work of the Mental Health Association of the Eastern Shore by providing several behavioral health programs called Mental Health First Aid and Teen Mental Health First Aid. These programs are evidence-based public education programs that have been proven to increase mental health literacy, reduce stigma, teach basic helping skills and how to handle a mental health or substance abuse crisis. The eight-hour

training sessions are taught by certified Mental Health First Aid trainers. Additional training specific to sub-groups include a module for higher education, older adults, veterans and emergency personnel. As a result, Mid-Shore residents will become familiar with basic mental health issues, how to recognize someone in a mental health or substance abuse crisis and know where to refer them.

The MAERDAF grant award funds were used to provide the salaries, wages and fringe benefits of two Trainers for community training on mental health; costs of training materials including for Mental Health First Aid Training Manuals; and costs of promotional materials such as printed rack cards and other materials for training sessions. *Six month extension approved.*

Fort Ritchie Community Center, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$35,000

Project Name - Job Skills Training for Teens (Junior Staff Initiative)

Summary - Fort Ritchie Community Center, Inc. ('Fort Ritchie') plans a Job Skills for Teens (Junior Staff) initiative. The goal of the initiative is to prepare teens from Washington and Frederick Counties to successfully enter the workforce through a job skills program that focuses on "soft" skills instruction and practice. Participants were empowered to develop skills that will aid in their initial job search, as well as, set them on a course to be successful employees, employers, supervisors, and possible entrepreneurs. The program featured three main components: group instruction through weekly group meetings that share the importance of developing skills such as communication, initiative, and accountability; practical work experience.

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to provide for the salaries and wages of program staff; stipends for participants for an estimated 400 work sessions; transportation costs for three field trips; purchase of equipment including a projector and a tablet; purchase of instructional supplies and participant materials including: refreshments, training and booklets, work shirts; promotional, advertising and marketing costs and materials. Due to COVID-19, the program transitioned to online learning sessions. *Six month extension approved.*

Garrett College

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Diesel Mechanic Workforce Development Training Program

Summary - Garrett College will create a noncredit diesel mechanic program which will be delivered through the Continuing Education & Workforce Development division of Garrett College. By collaborating with local school districts, businesses, and industry partners, the College seeks to provide training to develop skilled, entry-level workers that meet employment demands for diesel technology in the region. The College will purchase the tools and technology to get the program underway, with the ability to add additional resources as the program expands.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the purchase tools and technology necessary to implement the program including: hand tools, general shop tools and equipment.

Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Technical Study of Tree Cover and Canopy in Maryland

Summary - To increase their knowledge of the current state of forest cover and tree canopy in Maryland, the 2019 General Assembly passed legislation (Senate Bill 729 -Technical Study on Changes in Forest Cover and Tree Canopy in Maryland) tasking the Hughes Center with assistance from partners to conduct a technical study to review changes in Maryland's forest cover and tree canopy. The study includes surveying and mapping of existing forest cover and tree canopy in the state and potential afforestation and reforestation locations; analysis of the forests' health and quality; analysis of the state's progress to expand urban tree canopy acres and plant riparian forest buffers; analysis of observed and projected land cover changes using the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool; analysis of observed and projected changes in the amount of forest cover; a review of forest mitigation banking in the state; and a programmatic and funding review of federal, state, and local tree and forest planting programs. The ultimate goal of the completed work is to provide a clear understanding

of the current state of forest cover and tree canopy in Maryland as well as serve as a roadmap for the future.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for consultant costs to produce the Forest Cover and Tree Canopy study.

Health Partners Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$30,000

Project Name - Health Partners Medical

Summary - Health Partners coordinates access to care for patients that require health care services includes hosting homeless resource events and referrals to specialists and other community organizations. Health Partners has onsite adult and pediatric dental programs as well as a transportable dental unit serving the dental health needs of the local community in such venues as churches, senior centers, and other local nonprofits that are focused on the underserved citizens in the community. The organization is in collaboration with local health departments to improve access to free health services. These services include health education, free breast and colon cancer screenings, smoking cessation classes and diabetes prevention.

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to fund two health care positions: a nurse practitioner who provided medical care and a medical assistant whose responsibilities included supporting healthy behavior change, linking patients with community resources and assisting the nurse practitioner; purchase of necessary program technology and the administrative costs to implement the program.

Jesse Klump Memorial Fund, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$19,000

Project Name - "Save a Shore Farmer" campaign to end farmer, farmworker and farm family suicide

Summary - The "Save a Shore Farmer" program, executed by the Jesse Klump Memorial Fund, raises awareness of rising rates of suicide in farm communities and works to stem those increases. For a second year, the Fund will continue its multi-media outreach efforts through billboards, televised public service announcements, radio appearances, tabling events, distribution of suicide prevention materials, and presentations at farm events. Because rural areas suffer historically higher rates of suicide, and because mental healthcare in these communities labors under a crippling stigma, the Fund employs more subtle and less face-to-face methodologies. The second year will feature more direct outreach and will create resources that other like-minded agencies can use to create their own programs.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the salaries, wages, and transportation costs for the Project Coordinator; costs of marketing and media materials that included but not limited to custom exhibit materials; television spots; 12'x25' billboard rental; cable television air time; hosting program website, www.saveashorefarmer.com.

LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$20,000

Project Name - Increasing the Numbers and Capacities of Rural Maryland's Servant Leaders

Summary - The LEAD Maryland Foundation (LEAD) increases the numbers and capacities of people serving rural Maryland, and provides leadership development fellowships. Fellows complete a two-year educational program to increase skills and knowledge for mobilizing people to address issues and community needs. Fellows learn to consider issues from local to global perspectives, giving them a greater understanding of public issues. LEAD will execute five (5) multi-day seminars for twenty-two Fellows.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for lodging, meals and venue rentals costs for the seminars; provided for transportation costs to various locations; consulting costs; one guest speaker; and materials, supplies and food for associated bus tours.

Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Committee, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$22,500

Project Name - Phase II: Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area (LESHC) Marketing, Positioning, and Strategic Analysis

Summary - The Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Committee (LESHC) is currently undergoing organizational development and will change its name to the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area (LESHA). The mission of LESHA is to preserve, protect and promote the cultural, natural, and historical heritage of Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties. Continuing the work begun by the Board of Directors' Marketing, Positioning, and Strategic Analysis, the organization seeks to hire a consultant to produce a branding and positioning document for stake-holders, implement new branding on the website and on social media platforms, create and implement new branding email template for all future communications.

MAERDAF grant award funds provide for meeting expenses and materials related to hosting focus groups; consultation costs for planning, development and outreach efforts; consultation costs for organizational branding, creative concepts and design; consultation costs for a style guide and design execution; and, advertising and marketing costs.

Lower Shore Land Trust

Amount Awarded - \$11,574.77

Project Name - ShoreCorps/AmeriCorps Pollinator & Baywise Landscaping Conservation Outreach & Education Coordinator

Summary - The Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) assists landowners throughout Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties, as well as offering tools to communities for habitat restoration and outdoor recreation. The Lower Shore Land Trust hosted a ShoreCorps AmeriCorps position, who served as a Conservation Outreach and Education Coordinator to support the organization's mission and activities. The activities this Coordinator will support include the 2020 Delmarva Pollinator Festival, the 13th Annual Native Plant Sale, community greenscape activities, volunteer coordination, and LSLT's education outreach.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the salary and wages of a ShoreCorps member; transportation costs of this member; equipment costs including the purchase of a computer; cost to attend program-related trainings and conferences; and, the production of brochures and other materials, which included five-hundred landowner newsletters.

Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

Amount Awarded - \$23,047

Project Name - Lower Shore Heritage Greenway Regional Engagement - 20th Year Anniversary

Summary - The Lower Shore Heritage Greenway (LSHG) was created to serve as a community enhancement strategy that promotes economic development while helping to protect environmentally sensitive areas and the heritage of the Upper Bay. Their goal is to enhance visitation and economic growth while providing a mechanism to connect the area's cultural and natural offerings. Building on three regional planning efforts, Maryland Heritage Areas, National Park Service National Historic Trails, and the Rural Legacy Program, the creation of a long-term regional engagement plan will increase tourism, thereby bolstering the local economy while supporting the region's heritage. In Fiscal Year 2020, LSHG planned an anniversary event and hosted a shoreline cleanup, River Sweep. These milestones provide a unique opportunity to promote the heritage area and increase community awareness and tourist visitation.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for salaries and wages of the Executive Director, Project Manager, and Administrative Assistant for project time; costs of consultant services for media content, website enhancements, marketing, and a new brochure; and, costs of printing and development of an engagement and marketing plan and other materials.

Maces Lane Community Center**Amount Awarded - \$21,000****Project Name - Maces Lane Community Center**

Summary - The Mace's Lane Community Center, Inc. (MLCC) was organized and established as a not-for-profit 501c3 in 2018 by the Good Shepard Association and the Mace's Lane Alumni Association in Cambridge, Dorchester County. The MLCC oversees the activities to preserve and transform the historic Mace's Lane High School building into a community center. Mace's Lane High School was an all African American student high school built in 1952. During segregation, all African American students within Dorchester County attended the high school between 1952 and 1969. The MLCC will foster inclusive community participation and provide an environmentally safe and friendly facility for the arts, education, recreation, celebration, and locally based human services to increase the opportunity for personal and collective growth of the community.

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to obtain a consultant to develop a history of Maces Lane Highschool and design display space to highlight historical items.

Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation**Amount Awarded - \$10,050****Project Name - 7th Farm-Based Education National Conference**

Summary - The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation partnered with the National Farm-Based Education Network (FBEN) in Vermont to co-host the 7th Annual FBEN National Conference in Maryland in November, 2019. The conference included two days of regional bus trips to visit farm-based education sites on the Eastern Shore, Western Maryland, and Central/Southern Maryland, followed by two days of formal conference to be held at the Pearlstone Conference Center and Farm, in northern Baltimore County. The general session included workshops, member interactions, featured speakers, and meals. Professional development occurred at every conference component, and the conference covered a diverse range of topics, including farms-to-classrooms, educational events on farms, boards of directors composition, horticultural and animal-assisted-therapy, equitable human resources practices, branding, youth programs, and educational farm-infrastructure training.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for conference registration costs for in-state (Maryland) attendees and bus transportation costs for the conference field trips to farm-based education sites.

Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts**Amount Awarded - \$2,500****Project Name - Maryland Envirothon**

Summary - The Maryland Envirothon educates high school students in grades 9 through 12 in natural resource conservation while training future leaders for success throughout life. Envirothon teams are made up of 5 students who work together to study Maryland's natural resources over the course of a school year. Teams representing Maryland's soil conservation districts compete in local competitions, a regional competition on the Eastern Shore, and a State-level event.

MAERDAF grant award funds will provide for the costs of meals offered at the Maryland State Envirothon event in 2021 due to event postponement. *One year extension approved.*

Maryland Forestry Foundation**Amount Awarded - \$39,600****Project Name – Spurring Fossil Free -Biomass**

Summary - The Maryland Forestry Foundation (The Foundation) engaged and addressed concerns of the state's most active environmental organizations on the use of fossil-free biomass as part of growing need to focus on renewable natural resources future by producing a science-based white paper showing wood energy technology is high-tech, clean, renewable, carbon-neutral and supports the local economy. Due to COVID-19, the Foundation converted the original in-person roundtable into a series of five webinars, which highlighted available technologies, economic competitiveness, ease of installing and operating biomass energy systems to examine how Maryland commercial and

institutional consumers can benefit from the adoption of thermal biomass energy solutions. The webinar series will contribute to a written strategy and provided a time frame over the next two years for progress toward an operating combined heat power project in Maryland.

MAERDAF grant award funds were provided to produce the webinar series and the consultation costs to develop and produce papers and reports and conduct research. While the project goals remained the same, adjustments were made to reflect COVID-19 challenges and a 6-month grant was approved to complete this project. *Six month extension approved.*

Maryland Forests Association, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Maryland Forest Markets Readjustment Project

Summary - The Maryland Forests Association (MFA) in Fiscal Year 2020 will conduct all-inclusive outreach to the broad community of stakeholders and beneficiaries of Maryland's forests and forest markets, culminating in a conference event to ascertain feedback and strategies focused on promoting new markets for forest products. With the recent shocks to the job market in the Maryland forestry sector, the Association will deliver the Maryland Forest Markets Readjustment Project, convening a variety of stakeholders in the form of three regional meetings in partnership with the Tree Farm program, local Forestry Boards, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, as well as individual meetings with staff from each of the five economic development councils.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the consultation costs to produce forest industry recruitment and retention plans for each economic development council; salary of the MFA Executive Director; transportation costs including bus rental for two tours of local forests and related industries; venue rental costs, materials and meals for three regional meetings; provided for venue rental costs, including meals, room rental, materials, audio/visual, and a facilitator for a conference event; and, necessary administrative expenses including website hosting services, postage, other administrative expenses. Due to COVID-19 unexpected shutdowns and restrictions on group gatherings a *six month extension was approved.*

Maryland Rural Development Corporation

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Adult Education Wraparound Expansion

Summary - Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) will expand its adult educational programming, currently offered in Cecil and Caroline Counties, to Harford County. This generational program acknowledges the real problems keeping so many from pursuing further education and future economic stability. The evening is a far more convenient time for traditional working parents to meet their own education but often the lack of child care and meal conflicts alone prevent some parents from attending. In Fiscal Year 2020, MRDC hired child care services to allow low-income Harford County adults to attend adult education classes (General Education Diploma and English as Second Language).

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the costs of child care services during evening educational classes.

Mid-Shore Pro Bono, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Economic Stability Workshops

Summary - Low income families are particularly susceptible to legal problems and often do not even understand that their problems are legal in nature. Building upon existing work to help families maintain economic, financial and housing stability, Mid-Shore Pro Bono offered a series of prevention-focused civil legal educational workshops specific to low-income needs. Specifically Mid-Shore Pro Bono offered three financial education workshops in the Upper Shore, the Mid-Shore and the Lower Shore using partner locations. The workshops focused on money management to prevent legal problems and surrounded three important topics - Housing, Consumer Protection and Employment.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the costs of salary, wages, and fringe benefits for the Project Manager, as well as for the costs of transportation and costs of participating in various training programs for this position. Additionally, the funds provided for the costs of development, printing, and distribution of workshop materials including marketing materials and brochures; advertisements including print media and radio; and the cost of office supplies.

Ocean City Development Corporation

Amount Awarded - \$21,000

Project Name - Shore Craft Beer App & Mobile Marketing Platform

Summary - Ocean City Development Corporation, Inc. (OCDC), alongside Shore Craft Beer, developed a mobile platform to promote the Lower Eastern Shore's craft brewery and tourism economy. This platform provided real-time marketing data and promoted Maryland's craft beer and tourism businesses.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the consultation costs to develop a mobile application; the costs of the application's web hosting; the costs to market the application; and the cost for the Executive Director to attend professional development training.

People for Change Coalition

Amount Awarded - \$34,000

Project Name - Mighty Youth TV Production

The People for Change Coalition (PFC) implemented a 2-week teen media arts and training program called MYTV (Mighty Youth TV Production Program) that runs on the weekend, after-school, and during the summer. MYTV helps teens develop skills in film and video production, camera operation, proper lighting, sound set-up, and crew interaction targeting teens in Charles, St. Mary's, and Southern Prince George's County who have an interest in media arts, film, television production, marketing and communications. Participants gained the proper skills, and training in film and video production, creating scripts and messaging, conducting interviews, and commercials.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the costs of salaries and wages for the Executive Director and Staff Assistant; transportation costs for site visits and projects; program equipment, including camera systems, tripods, sound and lighting units, and laptops with software; training materials and supplies; consultation services for program evaluation and design, media instruction, and student assistance; marketing, including advertising, social media advertising to showcase the videos and news stories projects, e-blasts, graphic and flyer design; and, administrative costs to implement the program.

Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Inc

Amount Awarded - \$35,500

Project Name - Saving and Creating Small Business Jobs in Rural Maryland

Summary - Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce Foundation ('the Foundation') will develop a digital decision support tool in collaboration with BEACON at Salisbury University. The tool provided twenty-five indicators on small-business job creation and retention in rural Maryland, allowing small business owners to better utilize existing and future programs intended to incentivize hiring. The tool includes dashboards with scenario analysis and economic modeling functionality. During development, the Foundation convened an advisory group, which offered feedback at the model design stage, at 50% completion, and after delivery. The advisory group also reviewed input from local chambers of commerce, guided the final report, and assisted the plan for the dissemination of the tool.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the costs of salaries, wages, and fringe benefits of employees of the Foundation to implement the project; consultation costs to develop prototype economic models, key performance indicators and associated dashboards; and, costs to purchase necessary datasets from vendors.

Telamon Corporation**Amount Awarded - \$40,000****Project Name - Food and Service Training program, located at the One Stop Café.**

Summary - Telamon, a workforce-oriented nonprofit, provides training, educational supports, and supportive services to Lower-Shore Marylanders who seek job skills and lack reliable transportation. Telamon's One Stop Café, located at the Salisbury Multi-Purpose Center, hosts the Food and Service Training (FAST) to enable its community to connect with the food service and hospitality industries. FAST trainees received educational support, work readiness training, computer literacy, financial education, and may attain ServSafe industry credentials.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the costs of food supplies and food service supplies; the costs of tuition for program participants; the costs of transportation for program participants and the costs of printing of menus and promotional material, including social media advertisements.

The Arc Central Chesapeake Region**Amount Awarded - \$40,000****Project Name - Multidimensional Approach to Workforce Development**

Summary - Established in 1961, the mission of The Arc Central Chesapeake Region is to promote respect, create opportunities, facilitate services, and advocate for equal rights for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Multidimensional Approach to Workforce Development project will involve hiring a Workforce Strategy Consultant to research and analyze employment trends in the five counties of the Upper Eastern Shore (Talbot, Queen Anne, Kent, Caroline and Dorchester counties). This will include a comprehensive approach towards increasing employment to meet the critical need for Direct Support Professionals and increase meaningful and equitable employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the consultant services to conduct research and analyze employment trends.

The Arc Southern Maryland**Amount Awarded - \$8,300****Project Name - Volunteer Coordinator- The Arc Southern Maryland**

Summary - The Arc Southern Maryland is the leading advocate for children and adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities living and working in Southern Maryland. The Arc provides an array of services including housing, job placement, and behavioral support services. Their mission is to create opportunities for independence and personal success for people with different abilities in inclusive communities. In Fiscal Year 2020, the Arc Southern Maryland was selected as a service site for the 2019-2020 Volunteer Maryland-AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator program. The Volunteer Coordinator will recruit and retain volunteers and coordinate volunteer activities and events.

The MAERDAF grant award funds were used to provide for the Volunteer Maryland position stipend.

Untangled Minds, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$10,000****Project Name - Advanced Manufacturing Professionals (AMP)**

Summary - Maryland manufacturers are critically short of workers and high school students are often unaware of the opportunities that exist with local companies and do not gain the skills needed to be productive in the workforce. Untangle Mind's proposed Advanced Manufacturing Program (AMP) teaches highly needed problem solving, critical thinking and specific Career and Technology Education skill sets within a framework of life success skills. The multi-disciplinary approach to project-based learning is facilitated by local industry partners that engages with students in the classroom to help them gain the entry and mid-level skills for which employers are looking. Untangled Minds hosted an AMP Career Fair and Student Showcase at the completion of the year's program.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the costs of AMP classroom instruction; the costs of materials and supplies for student projects; the costs of stipends and other necessary costs for student development, instruction, and transportation included in AMP participant internships; and, the marketing costs such as hosting events to recruit students and build awareness.

Western Maryland Resource Conservation & Development Council

Amount Awarded - \$34,650

Project Name - Western Maryland Woodyard Feasibility Analysis

Summary - The Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council's (WMRC&D) mission is to build and sustain resource conservation programs which raise the quality of social, economic, and environmental development in our region. Western Maryland RC&D will engage a consultant to conduct a feasibility study which will analyze the economic opportunities and costs of establishing a new woodyard in Western Maryland. The closure of Verso's mill in Luke is widely recognized as a catastrophic economic loss to the entire region, affecting more than 350 logging businesses. By assessing the many factors which are necessary to understand in order to invest the large sums of capital needed to construct a woodyard, this project will serve as a tool for leveraging existing forestry opportunities to spur future economic development in Western Maryland.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided for the cost of salary and fringe benefits of the Western Maryland RC&D Executive Director; provided for the consultation costs to produce a Woodyard Feasibility Analysis; provided for the consultation costs to create a Market Research Report for the forestry industry in Western Maryland; and provided for the administrative costs to implement the project.

YMCA of the Chesapeake, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Providing Access and Opportunity for Children Living on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Summary - Serving all nine counties of the Eastern Shore, YMCA of the Chesapeake helps kids develop, provides resources for personal growth, and builds community. YMCA of the Chesapeake serves an entirely rural service area where access and opportunity to programs and services is at great risk of alienating the community's most vulnerable and underserved due to barriers like transportation. YMCA of the Chesapeake will purchase a 14-passenger bus, allowing it to safely provide for the programmatic needs of its campers, after-school participants, sports-team members.

MAERDAF grant award funds were used to purchase a 14-passenger bus. *Six month extension approved.*

Wicomico Farm and Home Show, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$21,905.45

Project Name - Wicomico County Fair Livestock Show & Facility Improvements

Summary - The Wicomico County Fair and Home Show (WFHS) celebrated its 83rd year in August 2019. The vibrant, family-oriented event highlights agriculture and the heritage of the Lower Eastern Shore, attracting thousands of visitors each year to Winterplace Park in Salisbury. WFHS constructed a new livestock show ring, installed permanent electricity and improved drainage in the area at Winterplace Park that is currently used by youth to show livestock at the Wicomico County Fair.

MAERDAF grant award funds provided construction costs for a 40 foot by 40 foot pole building including materials and supplies and the costs to deliver electricity to the building including materials and supplies. The project was placed on hold as the work and labor is in kind and is limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. *Six month extension approved. *This grant award was partially funded through the MAERDAF only funds and the other portion through the RMPHF award fund.*

Entrepreneurship

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center

Amount Awarded - \$200,000

Project Name - Scaling Agritech and Aquatech in Maryland

Summary - The Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) operates the F3 Tech Accelerator program ('F3 Tech'). F3 Tech sought to expand on previous activities and engage with organizations outside of the State of Maryland to build a stronger awareness of the opportunities in Maryland for agribusiness development. F3 Tech established relationships with Cornell University and the North Carolina Research Triangle with the goal of attracting more out-of-state founders for F3 Tech's start-up development programs. The Center will also showcase F3 Tech businesses' success at national agritech and aquatech conferences and events.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for salary and wages for program staff; digital content management, redesign of website and management, video footage and photography, and graphic design services; registration and travel expenses to attend industry events, including conferences and trade shows; marketing and promotional materials including a trade show display, rack cards, flyers, business cards and apparel; digital and print advertising costs; and, costs for outreach campaign and activities.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center

Amount Awarded - \$20,000

Project Name - Repurposing Vacant Poultry Houses

The Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center through its F³ Tech program seeks to partner with Shore Gourmet, a food-based 501(c)6 corporation with a mission of promoting and sustaining value-added agricultural businesses on Maryland's Eastern Shore, to work on a Poultry House Pilot project. Vacant poultry houses are becoming an increasing problem on Maryland's Eastern Shore. As houses age out or growers decide to cease raising chickens, they are left with an asset that can no longer produce income. Additionally, these houses are left to deteriorate, becoming both an environmental and aesthetic problem on the Eastern Shore. This project is aimed at determining whether vacant poultry houses can be repurposed for other uses, such as aquaculture, microgreens, herbs, insects, and other agriculture commodities.

RMPIF grant award funds will be used to complete testing of the soil, building, water, and plants for bacterial growth; utilize various disinfectant methods and barriers to learn what works best to eradicate bacteria; construct growing crop containers; lighting and electricity for crops; labor to build containers for produce; and, maintaining and monitoring plants, testing and project administration.

Howard County Economic Development Authority

Amount Awarded - \$35,137

Project Name - National Automated Food Traceability & Safety

Summary - Emerging food safety and food lot traceability requirements are placing growing computerization demands on farmers. Current information technology solutions are cost prohibitive and in some cases this hurdle is blocking small farmers from selling to large buyers. The Howard County Economic Development Authority developed a cloud-based National Automated Food Traceability and Safety (NAFTS) application, an IT solution for small farmers across the state to barcode lot tracking and digitize safety recordation and Food Safety and Modernization Act compliance.

RMPIF grant award funds provided the necessary equipment, including a mobile phone and a barcode printer, for each of the twenty test-stage participants; the production of promotional and marketing materials including posters, banners and training kits; costs of software development including unit testing, integration testing, field hardening and final post-test development; costs for service requirement gathering, quality testing, training, test support, post-test feedback collection and the roll out of the final software version; costs for a safety review of the developed product; and, travel costs for demonstration, training and support.

Preservation Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$50,000

Project Name - Campaign for Historic Trades Workforce Development

Summary - The Campaign for Historic Trades, a new partnership between Preservation Maryland and the National Park Service, supports the National Historic Preservation Training Center, headquartered in Frederick, Maryland. This program helped rural businesses attract craftsmen by providing paid apprenticeships in the highly valued historic trades. Apprenticeship trainees completed a 20-week apprenticeship and then were deployed to a park within the National Park Service system. Once the apprenticeship is completed, the workforce training participants are eligible for permanent employment.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for program support staff to recruit apprenticeship candidates, place apprenticeship graduates in permanent jobs, expand the number of private sector employers who participate in the program, and develop communication materials and associated administrative costs.

Preservation Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$200,000

Project Name - Rural Maryland Under-Represented Communities Revolving Fund

Summary - Rural areas that contain older buildings that have not been included in a historic district and which are typical of communities that are under-represented on the National Register of Historic Places often suffer for economic disinvestment. In Fiscal Year 2020, Preservation Maryland launched and administered the Rural Maryland Under-Represented Communities Revolving Fund, an innovative program that will focus on the preservation and revitalization of at-risk historic properties that are typical of communities that are under-represented in rural historic districts. The Fund is utilized to stabilize and market historic properties to new owners, lend to local nonprofits the funds needed to protect properties and take critical steps for short-term and long term reuse. In other cases, revolving funds will be used to make loans to property owners who agree to secure the property and take needed steps to protect, stabilize, and reuse the properties in perpetuity.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for salary, wages, and fringe benefits for program staff; consulting services for financial underwriting, legal, architectural and engineering services, and loan making; loans to assist the preservation of historic properties of under-represented communities in rural Maryland; program travel costs; and, program administrative costs.

The College of Southern Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$350,000

Project Name - The College of Southern Maryland Velocity Center

Summary - The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) built the Velocity Center by retrofitting and building out a warehouse in an Opportunity Zone located at 4445 Indian Head Highway, Indian Head, Maryland. The CSM Velocity Center, operated and managed by CSM when complete, will provide resources for a variety of activities related to entrepreneurship and experimentation, innovation, and workforce development for current and future scientists and engineers. The space will provide a venue for a business incubator, co-working space, and host conferences.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for construction and renovation costs to the existing building to include design, engineering, utility and labor.

Healthcare

Asian American Center of Frederick

Amount Awarded - \$125,000

Project Name - Achieving Collaboration for Health Equity - Rural Maryland (ACHE - RMD)

Summary - The social determinants of health, including transportation, food access, and available health services, present major obstacles to sustainable health outcomes across the country. The Asian American Center of Frederick (AACF) seeks to mitigate these social determinants by providing a variety of

services in Western Maryland, with a target of connecting minority residents with primary medical services. Building from a model of cultural competency and health equity, AACF offers Community Health Worker (CHW) training to address the highest disparities in service provision and risk in the social determinants of health. These trainees participated in a new CHW cohort for Washington and Frederick counties and will focus on maternal and child health, health literacy, diabetes and chronic disease management. Trainees received professional education, certification, and gained experience in health and human services delivery systems, with potential employment with AACF partners by the end of the program year.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the salaries, wages, and fringe of multiple project staff, including a Project and Grant Manager, CHW development supervisor, a Fiscal Officer, a Nurse Educator, and a Project Assistant; provided for program travel and outreach costs; purchase two computers; provided for Maternal/Child Health (MCH) outreach events in Frederick and Washington counties; retained an MCH-CHW consultant to serve as a lead for outreach and MCH education in Washington County; provided for MCH CHWs to work with local partners; covered administrative related costs; and, retained consultants to provide expertise in the social determinants of health, expertise in prenatal, delivery, and postpartum assistance and care, and provided CHW training.

Atlantic General Hospital

Amount Awarded - \$220,322.12

Project Name - Atlantic General Health System Integrated Behavioral Health Initiative

Summary - Atlantic General Health System (AGHS) deployed a tested and evidence-based model of behavioral care by offering an integrated telehealth program for primary care. This system reduced the rate of emergency visits for patients with behavioral health needs, including recidivism rates, by referring patients and providing care. ACHS obtained telehealth equipment and software and recruited a Licensed Clinic Social Worker and a Behavioral Health Nurse.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for salary, wages, and benefits for the Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Behavioral Health Integrative Coordinator and purchase of telemedicine equipment and software licensure.

Caroline County Health Department, MD

Amount Awarded - \$41,500

Project Name - Eastern Shore Opioid Overdose Prevention

Summary - The Caroline County Health Department, a State and County Government Health Agency, is dedicated to communicable disease prevention and wellness promotion. RMPIF funds were utilized to continue education on how to prevent, identify and access tools available to treat opioid addiction. Moving to Phase III of the program, outreach will extend to training business personnel, transportation workers, and education staff. Toolkits on drug use and abuse were made available to primary care physicians and pharmacy personnel. The Department will support the Local Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council and raise awareness in the Caroline County populace of the resources available.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the salary, wages and benefits of the Opioid Overdose Prevention Liaison; for printed materials such as programs and business cards; and administrative costs.

Channel Marker, Inc

Amount Awarded - \$22,725

Project Name - Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning replacement for Group Home in Denton

Summary - Channel Marker provides residential housing to persons with persistent mental illness who require continuous supervision. The project will upgrade four residential Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) units in a group home located in Denton, Caroline County, Maryland. Channel Marker will contract for the replacement of the old HVAC units and ensure delivery of the new systems, including installation and service.

RMPIF grant award funds were used to purchase the equipment and contract for the installation of four (4) residential HVAC units.

Charles Regional Medical Center Foundation

Amount Awarded - \$26,000

Project Name - University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center Transportation to Wellness Pilot Project

Summary - The University of Maryland's Medical System's Charles Regional Medical Center (CRMC) piloted a program to reduce transportation barriers and increase access to care for residents of Charles, St. Mary's, and Calvert counties. CRMC provided door-to-door round-trip and one-way transportation for eligible patients, partnering with Lyft Health and Wheels to Wellness alongside CRMC's existing Community Health Worker program. The program provided forty total rides per month from the hospital to a patient's home and fifteen door-to-door round-trip for the first post-hospitalization appointments of patients. Lyft Health and Wheels to Wellness delivered ten monthly reports and the CRMC Community Health Worker (Transportation Coordinator) delivered five bi-monthly reports.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the reimbursement of transportation services provided to patients; for the salaries and wages for the Project Manager and Transportation Coordinator; for the purchase of digital hardware for the Transportation Coordinator; for print marketing materials and office supplies; and, project administrative costs.

Circle of Angels Initiative Inc

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Text4Help

Summary - Text4Help is an information technology platform in development by the Circle of Angels Initiative, Inc. By partnering with suicide prevention professionals, Text4Help will offer a mobile telecommunications solution, including a remote service desk and local assets, to public entities in Southern Maryland. This solution, tailored to meet the needs of jurisdictions, seeking to aid at-risk youth and reduce the rate at which youth in their care commit self-harm and kill themselves. Circle of Angels developed a plan to mitigate gaps in mental health services in Southern Maryland, and convened stakeholders to determine how best to apply Text4Help to address the crisis of children who decide that life is not worth living.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for program travel costs; the purchase of information technology, digital, and office support equipment; telecommunication response services; project support costs, including materials and supplies, administrative and evaluation services; promotional marketing materials and services including digital, radio and television advertisements; and, the administrative costs of the project.

Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center

Amount Awarded - \$22,000

Project Name - Clinical Education Preceptor and AHEC Scholars Program

Summary - The Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center (ESAHEC) provides training for health profession students and medical residents through its Clinical Education and Scholars programs. The Center provides housing and administrative support for both of these programs. These programs supplemented the number of providers in underserved areas of the Eastern Shore and provided exposure to the cohorts of the region's communities as they choose where to practice.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the rental costs of three units to be used for student housing including maintenance and cleaning fees.

For All Seasons, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$117,902

Project Name - Investment in Telepsychiatry Capacity And New Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

Summary - For All Seasons provides behavioral health and rape crisis services but frequently experiences difficulty in finding and hiring appropriate medical professionals and, in particular, psychiatrists. To provide psychiatric and behavioral health treatment as broadly as possible

across the Mid-Shore, For All Seasons expanded its services to manage the current patient waiting list by developing a telepsychiatry treatment program.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the purchase of telepsychiatry equipment for offices located in Easton, Stevensville, Cambridge and Chestertown and provide patient room furnishings; purchase of equipment for three psychiatrists and software licensing; training and services of a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner; costs for telepsychiatry program design including work flow design, clinician setup and training, patient site setup, and workflow design.

Garrett County Memorial Hospital DBA Garrett Regional Medical Center

Amount Awarded - \$10,590

Project Name - Patient Experience Ambassador Program

Summary - Going to the hospital means giving up an amount of independence, a stressful experience for anyone. Garrett Regional Medical Center (GRMC) previously implemented the Well Patient Program, providing Community Health Workers to help patients transition after discharge from hospital care to home or rehabilitation and extended nursing care. Recognizing the decisions faced by patients in modern managed care, Garrett Regional Medical Center (GRMC) implemented a Patient Ambassador Program to serve residents of Garrett and Allegany counties during their stays at GRMC. The Patient Ambassador developed a relationship with patients, improved their comfort with hospital procedures, and facilitated handoff and referrals at discharge.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the salary and wages of the Patient Experience Ambassador position.

Go-Getters, Inc

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Beacon Place Crisis House Expansion and Renovation

Summary - The Lower Eastern Shore faces a shortage in behavioral health services, including crisis beds for individuals with persistent mental illness. The Lower Shore Clinic, Inc. and its subsidiary, Go-Getters, Inc. will expand its residential crisis bed offering by adding four beds in a new facility located on Beckford Avenue in Princess Anne, Somerset County, supplementing the existing four it offers in Wicomico. This facility provides an alternative to commitment or hospitalization and serve as a potential de-escalation and re-integration site.

RMPIF grant award funds provided renovations and general construction costs including installation of a sprinkler system; a Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning system; an alarm system; addition of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant toilets and showers; and, ADA compliant exterior ramp.

Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc. (MAC, Inc.)

Amount Awarded - \$26,250

Project Name - Living Well: Managing Depression

Summary - Tailored to patients age 55 and older with mild and moderate depression, MAC Inc. offers the Program to Encourage Active and Rewarding Lives (PEARLS) at the Living Well Center of Excellence in Salisbury, Maryland. PEARLS is an evidence-based, empowering, concrete, skill-building treatment program using problem solving methods, social and physical activation, and increased pleasant events to reduce depression. MAC expanded this community-based depression management program to serve additional older adults in the rural multi-county areas of Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties.

RMPIF grant award funds provided program services to participants in Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties including eligibility screening, intake, and in-person sessions (at home or in a community setting such as a senior center) for older adults; consultation costs, required paperwork, and data entry into the PEARLS data system (WellWare); and, costs for the PEARLS Counselor to hold one-on-one sessions with each participant using structured interventions.

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital
Amount Awarded - \$150,000
Project Name - East Run Dental Services

Summary - At the East Run Medical Center, MedStar St. Mary's Hospital (MedStar), a community hospital in Leonardtown, Maryland, will bring affordable dental services to Lexington Park in the promotion of positive oral health for those in Southern Maryland. MedStar contracted with a local partner who provides low and no-cost dental services in Charles County, Maryland. Services included x-rays, extractions, cleanings, fillings and sealants and will target underserved patients, including those on Medicare and Medicaid and those lacking insurance.

RMPIF grant award funds provided the costs of contracting program staff including: a Dental Hygienist; two Dental Assistants; a Dental Administrator; and a Program Administrator; dental services and costs associated with dental supplies including x-ray films, toothpaste, toothbrush heads for electric toothbrushes used during cleanings, gloves, paper bibs, tray covers and cleaning supplies for dental equipment; and, administrative costs including information technology and utilities.

New Horizons Supported Services, Inc.
Amount Awarded - \$44,000
Project Name - Getting Disabled Adults to Work in Rural Maryland (New Horizons' Supported Employment Program)

Summary: New Horizons Supported Services, Inc. (New Horizons) provides services for adults with developmental disabilities in the five counties of Southern Maryland. This program provided door-to-door transportation for adults, 21 and older with varying levels of disabilities that include down syndrome, traumatic brain injury, and autism, to employment and to employment-related training. This project reduced transportation barriers and helped disabled adults living in Charles, St. Mary's, or Calvert counties get to employment related activities.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the purchase of two six-passenger handicapped accessible vans; maintenance and fuel costs of the purchased vehicles; and, administrative costs.

Somerset County Health Department
Amount Awarded - \$21,536
Project Name - Diabetes Prevention and Self-Care Project

Summary - The Somerset County Health Department offered the National Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) to those at risk for diabetes and by replacing glucose monitors and testing supplies to those with poorly managed diabetes. The Program, recognized by the Centers for Disease Control, comprises of sixteen (16) weekly sessions and six (6) monthly sessions aimed at reducing the risk of Type 2 Diabetes for at-risk individuals. The Health Department ran one (1) DPP cohort in Somerset County and contracted with partner organizations to offer the program in Wicomico County and in Spanish.

RMPIF grant award funds provided the distribution of one-hundred-and-fifty glucose monitors, test strips, and lancets to targeted patients; promotion of program resources including print, radio, geo-targeted email, web advertisements and social media posts boosts; program materials such as office supplies, salad shakers, water bottles, exercise mats, measuring cups, and kitchen prep utensil sets and to purchase food for cooking demonstrations and last session celebration; educational brochures and literature targeting those with diabetes and improved self-care management; contracting services to deliver programming to Wicomico County residents; and, contracting services to deliver programming in Spanish.

Western Maryland Area Health Education Center
Amount Awarded - \$25,000
Project Name - Dental Access: Recovery

Summary - Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (AHEC West) targeted at least 40 residents of Allegany and Garrett counties who lack access to oral healthcare, especially those in treatment for addictions to provide dental services.

RMPIF grant award funds provided the salary and travel costs of a Community Health Worker and the purchase of fillings, extractions, and other dental services for the residents.

YMCA of the Chesapeake, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$36,091.12

Project Name - Expanding Cancer Support Services on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Summary -The LiveSTRONG component of the YMCA of the Chesapeake's Chronic Disease Program offers services to cancer survivors and their supporters by providing a safe, supportive environment to participate in physical and social activities focused on strengthening the whole person. Participants work with YMCA staff, trained in supportive cancer care, to build muscle mass and strength; increase flexibility and endurance; improve balance; improve confidence and self-esteem; improve the emotional well being of survivors and their families; and, build connectivity with other survivors during treatment and beyond. With the RMPIF grant and matching funds, the YMCA expanded its LiveSTRONG programs to its Eastern Shore Maryland locations.

RMPIF grant award funds provided salary, wages and fringe benefits for a Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator; funding for sixteen LiveStrong instructors; and, purchased materials and supplies for LiveSTRONG classes.

Infrastructure

Caroline County Board of Education

Amount Awarded - \$50,000

Project Name - Caroline County Board of Education Solar Light Projects

Summary - The Caroline County Board of Education (BOE) will install solar-powered light units at Lockerman Middle School's parking lot and the BOE Administration and Support Service Facility parking lot. These installations will occur in conjunction with other upgrades at these sites. The Lockerman Middle School install will include four single-unit lights, and the BOE Service Facility install will include one double-unit and six single-unit lights. The Caroline County BOE is incorporating Maryland Green Code and water quality protection practices on the campuses of its public schools and administrative and support facilities. These practices will be incorporated as BOE facilities are upgraded or constructed and include high-efficiency solar-powered lighting systems, low-energy split units for heating/air conditioning, and water quality protection practices including rain gardens, native plantings, bioretention areas and other green stormwater management systems.

RMPIF grant award funds were used to purchase and install ten (10) single-unit solar-powered lights and one (1) double-unit solar-powered light.

End Hunger in Calvert County

Amount Awarded - \$250,000

Project Name - End Hunger Warehouse Food Distribution Program

Summary - Food insecurity remains a stubborn fact for Southern Maryland families. End Hunger In Calvert County (EHCC) distributes 1.5 million pounds of food annually and supports seventy-three feeding organizations throughout the region. EHCC will build a new distribution warehouse which will include a 21,915 square foot food distribution center with the capacity for expansion and the addition of workforce development and community space in the future.

RMPIF grant award funds provided construction costs for the structure to be used as a distribution center and the purchase of doors and windows.

Frederick Innovative Technology Center, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$165,000

Project Name - Bio Tech Innovation Center Shared Lab Expansion/Renovation

Summary - The Frederick Innovative Technology Center (FITC) serves startup businesses which

often lack the financial base to lease private laboratory space, enabling a broader group of entrepreneurs to pursue their ideas. FITCI provides a number of business development activities including an accelerator program, mentoring and coaching, pitch contests and incubator space. Building on its current success with all available space being utilized, FITCI upgraded and expanded its current biotechnology laboratory space by reconstructing three shared biotech labs and one new common lab creating a new biotechnology center.

RMPIF grant award funds provided the equipment for a common laboratory and three shared laboratories. Equipment included distilled water station, refrigerator (-80C), centrifuge, autoclave, ice maker, dish washer, oven, gel imaging system, work benches, thermal imaging camera, hazardous material safety cabinet, chemical splash goggles, emergency preparedness cabinet, emergency eye wash station, distilled water stations, chemical hoods, refrigerators (-20C), dishwashers, culture incubators with shakers, magnetic hot plate stirrers, high precision weigh scales, high precision lab scales, microplate reader spectrophotometers, lab chairs, hydraulic lift workbenches, stainless steel equipment stands, workbenches with storage, and other supplies such as warranties and signage.

Kent County Commissioners

Amount Awarded - \$200,000

Project Name - Chestertown Business Campus

Summary - The Chestertown Business Campus is a multi-stage, eighty-acre, development created to retain and assist a major Kent County employer as well as develop future business opportunities. It is critical for economic growth, especially in rural areas, to have existing infrastructure in place. Phase III of the campus development entails the construction of approximately three-hundred-and-fifteen thousand (315,000) square-feet of space as well as the installation of sewer lines (3,168 lineal feet), water lines (5,691 lineal feet), and roadway (7,205 lineal feet).

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the cost of road construction to access Phase III of the Chestertown Business Campus office and manufacturing buildings including pavement, curbs and sidewalks.

Talbot County, Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$125,000

Project Name - Goldsborough Neck Road Improvements, Phase IB

Summary - Talbot County and the Town of Easton continued its work on new commerce and business park at the Mistletoe Hall Farm property located on Goldsborough Neck Road. A number of Talbot County's premier businesses are expanding, including the Whalen Company, Easton Utilities, and Hinckley Yachts. The development of this industrial site will help give Talbot County and Easton the assets they need to both retain and grow current business and attract new enterprises. When the vision for Mistletoe Hall Commerce-Business Park is fully executed, it will become an economic engine for the region. Phase IB, involved the completion of road widening and drainage improvements from the previous, Phase IA to Villa Road.

RMPIF grant award funds provided costs for road construction and widening, which included the purchase and installation of a gravel base; the placement of base course asphalt; the placement of surface course asphalt; the installation of silt fence; and, the stabilization of disturbed areas.

Town of Federalsburg

Amount Awarded - \$100,000

Project Name - The Old Denton Road Water Main Replacement Project.

Summary - The Town of Federalsburg, located in Caroline County, replaced 2,700 linear feet of water pipe under the old Denton Road with PVC and paved the roadway above the line. This replacement protected forty-six properties, housing fifty-plus low-income residents, from an asbestos-made transit pipe with ongoing maintenance issues.

RMPIF grant award funds provided for the completed replacement of water main.

RMPIF Regional Councils

Mid-Shore Regional Council

Amount Awarded - \$411,133.40

Program: The Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC) operates as a cooperative regional planning and development agency within Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties to foster physical, economic and social development. The Council initiates and coordinates plans and projects for the development of human and economic resources.

Summary: RMPIF grant award funds were provided for the following projects, including:

- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC): The MSRC financially assisted the operations of ESEC in its delivery of technical and financial assistance to the startup and entrepreneur ecosystem as well as supporting the Center's F3 Tech Accelerator program.
- Shore Gourmet/Chesapeake Culinary Center: The MSRC supplemented the partnership between Shore Gourmet and Chesapeake Culinary Center in order to increase rural and economic development on the Mid-Shore by working with farmers, entrepreneurs, and institutions by developing value added products, collaborated with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore to develop and research profitable niche crops with farmer to consumer, brand marketability, and the promotion of regional products.
- Geographic Information Systems Circuit Rider: The MSRC will fund a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Circuit Rider through a partnership with the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC). The Circuit Rider traveled throughout the Mid-Shore and provided on-site assistance with GIS-related tasks as well as specialized solutions to data analysis needs.
- DelMarVa Index: The MSRC continued working with the Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore and the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative to further develop an online repository and visualization tool that will function as a comprehensive data source for demographic, economic, geographic, environmental and social data, pertaining to the DelMarVa Peninsula (or if datasets for the 3 states are not consistently available, the focus will be on the 9 counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore). The DelMarVa Index received guidance from the existing advisory committee, comprised of economic development professionals in each County to determine those datasets that are of the highest priority. This project includes the two previous dashboard projects (Healthcare and Education), rolling their results into this larger tool.
- Building Foundation Heights in 500-yr Floodplain: The MSRC partnered with the ESRGC due to the increasing frequency and intensity of flooding in the Mid-Shore. The ESRGC collected building foundation heights for each structure located within the 500-year floodplain in the Mid-Shore counties. Foundation height is a critical dataset for predicting flood damage resulting from both nuisance events as well as large-scale natural disasters.
- Special GIS Project: Funded one GIS project.
- Annie's Project: The MSRC supported the University of Maryland Extension in providing Annie's Project to the Mid-Shore region. Annie's Project is a farm management workshop for women interested in agriculture. Additional activities included a farm tour and a hands-on recordkeeping/bookkeeping workshop.
- Regional Marketing: The MSRC supported the regional marketing effort Taste of the Eastern Shore (TOTES). TOTES is a long-standing effort to promote Eastern Shore government and business entities to a statewide audience. The economic development offices located in the Mid Shore region were offered a prominent display area at the event.

Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore
Amount Awarded - \$411,133.40

Program - The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland was formed by an Act of the Maryland General Assembly in 2001. The purpose of the Council is to facilitate regional planning and development in Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties.

Summary: RMPIF grant award funds were provided for the following projects, including:

- Worcester County Step Up and Reach for the Stars STEM Camp, Leadership Cohort, and Internship Program: Funds were used for placement of additional students in the program.
- Summer Youth Employment: The Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester County Boards of Education used the majority of the funds to pay the students and the balance to cover some staff costs as well as travel, supplies and background checks.
- M4Reactor STEM Maker Space: Implemented the Mobile "Makerspace" and partnered with Telemon for training programs focusing on modern manufacturing technologies.
- Economic Development Support and Supplemental Overhead Program Support: Supplemented overhead rental expenses to three programs, which included the One Stop Café and Public Dining Space ServSafe Certification Program, HotDesks Co-working Space, and M4Reactor Maker Space EDA Funded Workshop Area.
- Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC) programming: DelMarVa Index Phase II Interactive Online Economic Data Repository - The ESRGC assigned a portion of a GIS programmer's time and a GIS analyst's time to accomplish the project directly, as well as assigned a project manager to oversee the project and technical staff to accomplish any web programming tasks that were needed. Additionally, considerable ESRGC resources (servers, workstations, network, physical space, etc.) were utilized to accomplish this project.
- Regional Circuit Rider – Funded a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Circuit Rider through a partnership with the Mid-Shore Regional Council. The Circuit Rider traveled throughout the Lower Shore and provided on-site assistance with GIS-related tasks as well as specialized solutions to data analysis needs.
- Salisbury Housing Study – Study implemented as a response to an immediate need for data collection for housing challenges in Salisbury, located in Wicomico County, Maryland.
- Study implemented in response to an immediate need for data collections for housing challenges in Princess Anne and Crisfield, located in Somerset County, Maryland.
- General Operating Support for the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Center to continue its service of providing important GIS services to the region.
- Regional Branding and Marketing: Development and implementation of the Lower Eastern Shore Maryland long-term regional branding and marketing strategy.
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC): Funds used for administrative overhead associated with providing technical services to entrepreneurs and startup businesses as well as planning and development of programs and activities for the benefit of participating entrepreneurs and startup businesses.
- Project Opportunity: Funds used to develop marketing materials and conduct seminars to veteran business owners.

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Amount Awarded - \$411,133.40

Program: The mission of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland is to serve as a forum for the discussion and resolution of issues affecting the Southern Maryland Region.

Summary: RMPIF grant award funds were provided for the following projects, including:

- Southern Maryland Mobility Management Healthcare Transportation: Wheels to Wellness

matches patients with local human service providers who can fill the gap. Contract for wireless services for previously purchased Mobile devices used to coordinate health care transportation from participating vehicles; purchased routing and mileage software to track the Healthcare Rides; reimbursed mileage expenses by Transportation Providers; provided for the administration, oversight, and coordination of the Project.

- **Coordination and Expansion of Regional Multimodal Transportation Infrastructure:** The Council coordinated regional transportation initiatives, including the Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee (RIAC) and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Advisory Committee (BIAC), and develop grant proposals to further multimodal transportation in the region. Contracted with a certified transportation planner for RIAC and BIAC activities and meeting expenses. Planner executed grant proposals for additional rural transportation planning opportunities.
- **Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) Equine Conference:** SMADC promotes and represents the goods and services produced by the agricultural industry, including agri-tourism, aquaculture, equine, forestry, product, livestock, nursery/cut flowers, other seafood, and value-added products. Funds provided for venue rental expenses; travel mileage and lodging for speakers; Meals; Promoted the program through digital ads.
- **Product Promo Videos:** SMADC produce nine five-minute videos featuring each of its subsectors for distribution on various platforms.
- **SMAC F3 Tech Accelerator Program:** The Council partnered with F3 Tech, a start-up accelerator based on the Eastern Shore, to increase the resources available for agritech and aquatech ventures in southern Maryland. Grant award funds provided for lodging and meals for mentors and coaches of the Accelerator Weekend events; provided for digital and print marketing; provided for speaker fees and travel to the Accelerator events.
- **SMADC Southern Maryland Meats (SMM) Marketing & Community Involvement:** Contracted a Part-time Program Administrator to coordinate the installation and maintenance of the Little Free Library structures; Contracted tradespeople to build 100 of these free stranding structures and place the SMM logo on each one. Due to COVID-19, the libraries were not installed at public places. The Council requested and was approved a 6-month extension to complete this project.
- **Workforce Development Programs Re-Entry Program:** The Council's Job Source program provided workforce development programs for inmates preparing for re-entry, partnered with the Maryland Department of corrections and Farming 4 Hunger. Grant award fund provided for the salary and fringe benefits for the Council's Workforce Operations Manager and retained a consultant to deliver Life skills Training for Returning Citizens.
- **Workforce Development Programs – Project Open D.O.O.R.S.:** Project Open DOORS, an initiative led by the Council's Job Source program, provides self-employment training, one-on-one counseling and business planning support to participants. Grant funds provided for the salary and fringe benefits for the Council's Workforce Operations Manager; provided for instruction by the Small Business Development Center; and, provided for printed materials.
- **Workforce Development Programs – 9th Annual Hiring Event:** The Council planned to hold the 9th Annual Regional Hiring Event to connect employees with jobseekers in the region in May 2020. Grant funds cover venue rental expenses; materials and supplies for the event; and a consultant to execute and promote the event. Due to COVID-19, this event has been postponed but is planned to be completed with in the 6-month approved extension.
- **Workforce Development Promotional Video:** The Council retained a consultant to develop a video showcasing Workforce Development Services that will be viewable at all American Job Center locations and online.
- **Southern Maryland Heritage Area Destination Southern Maryland:** The Council partnered with Southern Maryland Heritage Area (SMHA) for regional marketing and promotion, printing and distribution of a travel guide and other regional marketing materials, website edits and social media presence, and support of various regional events. Updated website link-<https://destinationsouthernmaryland.com/>.

- **Tri-County Council Capacity Building & Administrative:** The Council increased its administrative capacity by employing a Fiscal/Grants Coordinator, who along with other staff, oversee the Council's suite of sponsored programs. Grant award funds were used to provide for the partial salary and fringe benefits for this position, as well as obtained public relations serves and related outreach materials.
- **Southern Maryland National Heritage Area:** The Council partnered with the Southern Maryland Heritage Area to pursue the designation of a national heritage area for the region. The partnership released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to conduct a comprehensive and inclusionary feasibility study that determines the viability of a National Heritage Area Designation for the Southern Maryland Heritage Area.

Tri-County Council for Western Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$411,133.00

Program - The mission of the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland is to provide a forum for local governments and citizens throughout Western Maryland to identify the issues and opportunities that are facing the region.

Summary - RMPIF grant award funds were provided for the following projects, including:

- Enhanced its loan fund programs to better serve the needs of the business and entrepreneurial community, creating and retaining jobs.
- Resources dedicated to form a Certified Development Company (CDC) under the name, Summit Development Corporation. The Council ensured that staff held sufficient professional education to administer a CDC, including membership in the National Association of Development Companies (NADCO). These actions allow the organization to process additional lending applications and leverage additional funds.
- Continued its Revolving Loan Fund activities as well as provided technical assistance to small businesses.
- Provided for the administration of the grant; salaries and fringe benefits for staff in support of Economic Development activities related to the Council and Summit Development Corporation; local travel to visit clients, marketed the CDC, visited lending institutions, and trained on best practices for CDC and revolving loan fund administration; software and office equipment; staff attendance at training courses for NADCO, events and webinars of the Council of Development Finance Agencies and the Economic Development Finance Service, and other necessary training to manage the Summit Development Corporation.
- Obtained additional insurance coverage for the Council's loan programs and Directors' and Officers' policies for the CDC's Board of Directors; technical assistance to small businesses.
- Subscribed to the CDC Bulletin Service and obtain client credit reports; maintained membership in the National Association of Development Organizations.
- Retained consultants to develop new web interfaces for the Council and for Summit Development Corporation and deliver CDC board member training.

Upper Shore Regional Council

Amount Awarded - \$411,133.40

Program - The Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC) is a regional planning and development organization serving Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties.

Summary - RMPIF grant award funds were provided for the following projects, including:

- Supported the acceleration of existing initiatives in the counties that are aligned with the regional priorities of the Council while utilizing resources for issues that have a regional focus and impact. Emphasis continued to be on strengthening the agriculture economy, increasing regional tourism, strengthening and developing small businesses, addressing transportation concerns as well as enhancing public/private partnerships.

- Focused on opportunities to increase business development and retention in the Upper Shore Region and embarked on other priority projects which enhance the quality of life for Upper Shore residents.
- Provided administrative costs including: fringe benefits for Council staff; travel costs related to the scope of work; office equipment; office rental expenses; registration costs and travel expenses for attendance at conferences and various meetings, Council meeting expenses, and membership dues and subscriptions to partnering agencies.
- Purchased materials, supplies and printed publications.
- Covered costs for consulting services for information technology support, legal, accounting, and marketing support.
- Provided for specific project costs, which included:
 - The creation of an Oyster Rotational Harvest Pilot program to assist small commercial watermen.
 - The creation of a data story pilot program, an interactive mapping tool, for the Upper Shore Region.
 - The development of the Upper Shore Regional Farm Museum including infrastructure needs.
 - The Cecil County Volunteer program "Cecil Cares".
 - Workforce training for Cecil County in partnership with Susquehanna Workforce Network.
 - EMSI data for Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's Counties.
 - Updating the Harvest directory website.
 - Assisting Queen Anne's and Kent Counties with their effort to educate students, parents, guardians, and educational professionals on trade careers and examining the feasibility of a regional school of technology.
 - Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) assistance to the jurisdiction and supporting the Eastern Shore programming provided by the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative.
 - Provide marketing assistance for the Fair Hill CCI5* event.
 - Development of an EMSI Industry Cluster study, a custom data analysis of the economic development opportunities in the Upper Shore region including a supply-chain analysis and emerging industry identification.
- Provided for the creation of a Small Business Revolving Loan Fund, a micro loan program for small businesses.
- Provided assistance for regional transportation needs including support for the Kent County Transportation Task Force and the region's efforts to alleviate traffic problems caused by the Delaware 301 toll and future improvements to the Bay Bridge.



Photo Far Left courtesy of Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, Hivelend, graduates of the F³ Tech Accelerator program, presenting at the The Agriculture Innovation Challenge held during The Farm Bureau Federation's 2020 National Convention, Austin TX; Middle Photo courtesy of Charles Regional Medical Center, Transportation to Wellness Pilot Project Clinic; Photo Far Right courtesy of Talbot County Department of Public Works.

Rural Maryland Foundation

The Rural Maryland Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization formed in 2001 to support the work of the Rural Maryland Council. The Rural Maryland Foundation continued its efforts to educate community foundations, rural charities and other interested parties in the Transfer of Wealth (TOW) opportunity. TOW is an estimate of American household wealth from which charitable giving could be realized.

The final report identified:

- **2016 Household Current Net Worth for Rural Maryland at \$530 Billion**
- **10-year TOW opportunity of \$64 Billion**
- **50-year TOW opportunity of \$703 Billion**
- **Capturing 5% of the 10-year TOW opportunity could result in \$3.2 Billion in new community investments**
- **Sustained annual payouts could equal \$160 million a year in perpetual grant making**

The Foundation has spoken to groups about creating a Rural Economic Development Philanthropy Network and identified potential models to replicate. The goal of the TOW project is to educate Maryland residents on the importance and impact of philanthropic support for rural Maryland communities has on the statewide, national and global economy. After considerable discussion, the Foundation has embraced the following overarching goal using the strategy goals: Keeping wealth in rural Maryland so that it can be used to support community economic development work. This community foundation "mission evolution" coupled with the massive inter-generational transfer of wealth opportunity provides for a powerful new, innovative, and rooted source of funding for rural Community and Economic Development. The Foundation is working on a pilot project in the Mid-shore Eastern Shore region. Several local partners and interested stakeholders have been identified. The Foundation will develop and adopt a three-year organizational development plan to facilitate this work.

The Foundation accepted a videography proposal to create a new Rural Aspirations film and completed filming in October 2019. The new video is available to view on the Foundation's YouTube Channel. The goal of the "Rural Aspirations Version 2" video is to educate Maryland residents on the importance and impact rural businesses have on the statewide, national, and global economy. The Rural Maryland Foundation initially planned to host virtual screenings with partner organizations. The screenings would offer an opportunity to conduct outreach, to engage residents in thoughtful discussion about how rural communities impact their lives, and to promote awareness of the film. The film showings could also include a featured longer-length film documentary that promotes rural communities and economies. However, due to the prohibition on gatherings, the Council will explore other distribution avenues including digital and tv advertising.

The Foundation has been instrumental in supporting the RMC's goals and projects. For example, when the RMC identified a lack of credit for young and beginning farmers, the RMC with Foundation support helped create the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation, also known as MARBIDCO.

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Support the Foundation by becoming a Member! All contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible
Learn More at ruralmdfoundation.org

Founded in 1994, the Rural Maryland Council operates under the direction of a 40-member executive board in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner. It serves as the state's federally designated rural development council and functions as a voice for rural Maryland, advocating for and helping rural communities and businesses across the state to flourish and to gain equity to its suburban and urban counterparts.

For more information, visit RMC's website at www.rural.maryland.gov

Rural Maryland Council
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401
410.841.5772

